

Responses to questions regarding the HPRP RFP

- 1. We are looking for clarification on the focus of the HPRP funds. In the first paragraph on page 3 of the RFP, it states “HPRP funds will cover other back rent and rapid re-housing activities, and those activities and services will be provided by the contractor.” The paragraph goes on to describe quick, short-term, and/or emergency work to rapidly house or re-house. On page 5 of the RFP, 5 of the 6 permitted uses for HPRP funds focus on the short-term; and only 1 of the permitted uses – case management – focuses on long-term work. Homelessness prevention so often requires long-term work – or at least longer-term case management and supportive services. We are concerned that focusing on the short-term will not address the systemic issues that many homeless persons continually struggle with. Yet we also understand that the HPRP funds are available for two years only. Does AHS want responses to the RFP to focus primarily on short-term or long-term efforts?**

Answer: The HPRP funds are focused on shorter term activity, to prevent homelessness or rapidly re-house people. Section IV lists permitted uses, and you will note that most of the uses are for 1 to up to 3 months. This is for two reasons. First, the intent of the HPRP funding is primarily to address homelessness as a result of the current economic downturn, not long term chronic homelessness. Second, the funding is limited, and will be used within a two years period. This does not mean that a contractor cannot make longer term commitments to certain people, but it will have to be done in the context of very limited funding and balanced against other competing needs. This is also why it is so important that these funds be integrated with other related funds, to make the best possible mix of all available funds, whether federal, state or local.

- 2. What is included in the data collection that is being required in the RFP? Please identify what will be included in the data collection referenced in the RFP.**

Answer: AHS is still developing the details for the data collection. However, HUD has issued guidance on HPRP reporting and HMIS requirements that can be found at the following links:

<http://www.hudhre.info/documents/HMISDataStandardsRevisedDraftNotice.pdf>

<http://www.cohhio.org/pdf/HPRP/HPRPDataElements.pdf>

AHS has formed a working group that will finalize the details.

- 3. How much time does AHS expect will be required to collect data on each client?**

Answer: Since we have not had these requirements before, it is impossible to tell. Contractors who have used the HMIS before, and have looked at the HUD requirements may have a better sense.

4. Is the state paying for licenses for HMIS software for the contractors who need one?

Answer: Yes. AHS has set aside \$150,000 for IT needs to implement HPRP, including hardware, software and technical assistance. This would include licenses for those contractors or sub-grantees who will need one. We may have to re-visit this if the statewide needs exceed \$150,000.

5. Does AHS have a chart for AMI by county in Vermont?

Answer: Yes. This is available to anyone who still needs a copy by contacting Diane Nealy at 241-2244, or diane.nealy@ahs.state.vt.us.

6. Is the intake and assessment process going to be a statewide, uniform process or will each area need to develop their own?

Answer: The intake and assessment process will be a statewide, uniform process. It will be provided to all contractors sufficiently ahead of time to provide uniform training.

7. Who at AHS will handle the appeals?

Answer: The appeals process is still being finalized. Appeals will first go to the contractor for in-house review. The next step will be to the AHS Secretary's office.

8. Will all regions be awarded some money?

Answer: HPRP funds will be allocated to each AHS district according to an agreed upon formula based on past use of GA funds for housing and homelessness.

9. Do individuals need to be homeless or at risk of homelessness?

Answer: Yes.

10. What is a state approved intake and assessment process?

Answer: AHS is developing a standardized intake and assessment process for all contractors to utilize.

11. Is Service Point considered an approved HMIS system?

Answer: Yes.

12. Can you let us know what other agencies in the Hartford AHS district that have sent a letter of intent to bid, so we can talk with them about coordinating our services, and further partnerships with other interested parties?

Answer: SEVCA has filed a letter of intent, and the Upper Valley Haven has filed a letter of intent to bid.

13. Does AHS have a preference between providing direct financial support, i.e., paying back rent or providing case management to these individuals?

Answer: AHS has no preference. The HPRP funds have some limitations, listed in the RFP and the HUD notice. The main point is that communities need to assess what funds are available, besides HPRP funds, and collaborate to make best use of all available funds, and to provide the service that will best meet the needs and have the most effect for those persons most at risk.